
	United States Department of Agriculture Forest Service	SUCCESS STORY	KLAMATH NATIONAL FOREST 1711 South Main Street, Yreka, CA 96097 (530) 841-6131 www.fs.usda.gov/klamath	
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Unraveling the Mystery of Bats in Siskiyou County

Recently, the Klamath National Forest and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Yreka Field Office sponsored an interesting Nocturnal Nightlife Guided Nature Walk focusing on the mystery of bats that occur in our area. Bats are a very misunderstood group of species and provide an important building block to the foundation of a healthy ecosystem. The trip was led by local biologists and bat experts. A group of 34 interested participants were led by local experts in a nearby cave system for an evening of presentations and hiking. Participants learned fascinating aspects of bat ecology and had the opportunity to carefully explore an area that is important to an overwintering population of bats.

This event was part of a NatureWatch/Connecting People with Nature education outreach program coordinated by USFS and USFWS.

Local bat experts Liz Wolfe, Ray Miller, Mary Ellen Coleburg, and Julie York provided the audience with an interesting, informative discussion about bat ecology, White-nose syndrome, the role of Barnum Cave, and proper bat handling. The group was led into Barnum Cave for a discussion on cave history, bat use, exploring parts of the cave, and being able to view bats in action.

Approximately 17 diverse species of bats occur in Siskiyou County. While some bats are closely associated with caves and mines in the area most local species occur in our surrounding forests. With the use of special adaptations and echolocation, our local bat species are vitally important at controlling insects in our area. This group of species is very sensitive to human disturbance. Studying and monitoring of these animals allows for better management to allow for bats to persist in our backyard. Caves, which provide habitat for many bats species, are also sensitive to disturbance and should be entered with care and respect. Some local caves have suffered permanent damage through vandalism. In order to manage the bats and cave resources the USFS has put in place seasonal restricts to limit human access in sensitive areas. For example, Barnum Cave is closed to public access during critical times of the year to allow for bats species, including the Townsend's Big-eared bat, to safely overwinter.

For more information on bats and cave management concerns visit:
<http://www.whitenosesyndrome.org/>

For more information on bats and other wildlife in our area contact the USFS at 530-842-6131 and the USFWS at 530-842-5763.
